

3.—MEASUREMENTS OF A SLOTH BEAR'S SKULL FROM ASSAM.

Mr. R. M. Pizey has sent us at the request of Mr. H. F. Meston the following measurements of the skull of a very large Sloth Bear which was shot by him in Mangaldai, Assam.

Length between uprights	...	$14\frac{1}{2}'' = 369$ mm.
Width	...	$8\frac{7}{8}'' = 226$ mm.
Height	...	$6\frac{3}{4}'' = 172$ mm.

The largest measurements recorded by Pocock, *Fauna of British India, Mammals*, vol. ii, 2nd ed., p. 145, are as follows:—

Condo-basal length.	Zygomatic width.	Locality.
345 mm.	219 mm.	Balaghat, C.P.

BOMBAY.

22nd June 1945.

EDITORS.

4.—A CARNIVOROUS SLOTH BEAR.

On the 20th February 1945 a large panther killed a cow in the vicinity of some rocky, jungle-clad hills. My machan was tied in a *mowha* tree in a field 25 yards from the carcass of the cow. At 7-40 p.m. a large bear arrived under my tree and started eating the flowers which had just begun to fall. After a few minutes of this appetiser, the bear made its way to the carcass of the cow, sat on its haunches and helped itself to such delicacies as it could find in the cow's stomach, finally gnawing the skin and meat off one of the front legs. After about an hour of this, it returned to my tree for some more *mowha* flowers before making off down a path, where it was met about 50 yards away by a she-bear with two cubs. The encounter appeared to cause mutual delight and it was evident that the first visitor passed on the information about the *mowha* flowers having fallen, as the she-bear then cantered gaily straight to the tree uttering chortles of delight as she came, followed by her cubs.

Mother and young then proceeded to the carcass and the three of them set on the stomach and intestines in earnest, one of the cubs finally extracting and removing the former into some bushes where with luscious sucking noises they all proceeded to devour it. Several times the cubs or the she-bear returned to the carcass to extract some other succulent morsel. The whole time in the intervals of loud inhalations and other slobbering noises, the bears seemed to keep up an animated buzz of conversation with one another. Finally at 9-30 p.m. they all departed.

The panther meanwhile had been giving tongue from a hill about 500 yards away, but was evidently deterred from approaching the kill by the formidable family of bears.

I remained in the machan until 11 p.m. and heard the panther's 'pheaul' noises every 10 or 15 minutes getting less distinct in the distance till 10 o'clock. He never returned.

The episode is of interest as it indicates the extent to which Sloth Bears, both young and old, relish a diet of meat, and also because this fact is evidently known to panthers, this particular